

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 EB-11 AID-20 IGA-02 IO-14

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 DRC-01

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R 141300Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1980

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 2067

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: EAID, SW, LA

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE SWEDISH ASSISTANCE TO LAOS

REF: STATE 088656; VIENTIANE 3522

1. SWEDISH MFA OFFICIAL, CONCERNED WITH AID TO SOUTHEAST ASIA, SAID GOS WOULD BE WILLING TO DISCUSS WITH UNION GOVERNMENT IN LAOS ANY REQUEST IT MIGHT WISH TO MAKE FOR BILATERAL ASSISTANCE. GOS HAS RECENTLY INFORMED LAO OF ITS WILLINGNESS TO SEND FAIRLY HIGH-LEVEL SWEDISH MISSION THERE, PROBABLY IN JUNE, TO DISCUSS AID POSSIBILITIES. GOS HAS OPEN MIND ABOUT TYPE OF HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS WHICH IT MIGHT FUND AND REGARDS FORM OF AID AS MATTER TO BE EXPLORED WITH LAO. SWEDES ARE AWAITING REPLY TO THEIR OFFER.

2. OFFICIAL SAID GOS IS TRYING TO ACQUAINT ITSELF THOROUGHLY WITH SITUATION IN LAOS, DISCUSSING THIS WITH USUNDOOTHER GOVERNMENTS ALREADY GIVING AID THERE AND WITH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, USSR, AND NORTH VIETNAM. LATTER THREE, OFFICIAL SAID, ARE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT STAYING POWER OF UNION GOVERNMENT AND HOPEFUL FOR PEACE. OFFICIAL EMPHASIZED THAT FINAL GOS DECISION ON WHETHER

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OR NOT TO PROCEED DEPENDS ON ITS ASSESSMENT OF DURABILITY OF UNION

GOVERNMENT AND LIKELIHOOD THAT SWEDISH AID FUNDS WILL ACTUALLY REACH THOSE IN NEED. DECISION DOES NOT DEPEND ON AVAILABILITY OF MONEY; UNALLOCATED FUNDS EXIST WHICH CAN BE USED FOR THIS PURPOSE.

3. TIMING OF SWEDISH AID IS UNPREDICTABLE, SOURCE SAID, AS LONG AS ITS FORM IS UNDERTERMINED. IF ONLY COMMODITY ASSISTANCE WERE INVOLVED, AID CONTRIBUTION COULD BEGIN ABOUT TWO MONTHS AFTER DECISION IS TAKEN TO START PROGRAM. PROJECT ASSISTANCE, HOWEVER, COULD INVOLVE SUBSTANTIAL PLANNING.

4. FY 1975 GOS APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FOR MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PUBLISHED LAST JANUARY, CONTAINS PASSAGE MENTIONING POSSIBILITY OF AID TO LAOS:

QUOTE: THE POSSIBILITY OF SWEDISH AID PROJECTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM, LAOS, AND CAMBODIA IS UNDER STUDY BY THE GOVERNMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARLIAMENT'S PRONOUNCEMENTS ABOUT THE ACUTE NEED FOR AID THERE AND IN LIGHT OF PROJECTS WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES ARE UNDERTAKING IN THE AREAS IN QUESTION.

QUOTE: IN LAOS, AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED ON FORMATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT, WITH SIMILAR REPRESENTATION FOR THE TWO SIDES. THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO BEGIN AID DISCUSSIONS WITH THAT GOVERNMENT WHEN IT HAS BEEN FORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT AND WHEN IT IS OTHERWISE PRACTICABLE FOR AID TO REACH THE GROUPS WHICH HAVE BEEN HARDEST HIT BY THE WAR. UNQUOTE.

5. COMMENT. FOR HIS OWN PART, OFFICIAL SAID HE FAVORED SWEDISH AID TO LAOS. REPORTING OFFICER RECEIVED IMPRESSION THAT WEIGHT OF INFORMATION COLLECTED BY SWEDEN TO DATE PREDISPOSES GOVERNMENT TO PROCEED. IF SWEDISH AMBASSADOR VIRGIN REPORTS FAVORABLY ON HIS RECENT TRIP TO LAOS AND THE JUNE MISSION FINDS NO HINDRANCE, WE WOULD EXPECT GOS TO MOVE AHEAD IN FY 75. GUTHRIE

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